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THE ART OF PREACHING

Seldom does a really able preacher find time and occasion to tell his fellow-preachers what preaching means to him. In the last Yale Lectures Charles Silvester Horne found and used the time and the occasion.¹ The lectures proved to be his last message to ministers. Three days after their delivery he passed away. The lecturer was for ten years pastor of a church "in a fashionable section of the world's metropolis." He then assumed the leadership of Whitefield's Tabernacle, and here "close to the homes of the poor and to haunts of shame" he wrought for ten years in "the hardest kind of work." "He was honored with the chairmanship of the Congregational Union of England and Wales." "He was one of the favorite spokesmen of the Nonconformist conscience." He stood for Parliament and "in 1910 he was returned as Junior Member for Ipswich." Dr. Bridgman, from whose biographical sketch we have taken these notes, reminds us that at forty-nine years of age Silvester Horne had become "one of the remarkable religious leaders of the age."

There are eight lectures in all. The general subject for all, we are told, might have been "Keeping the world's soul alive." In the first lecture, "The Servant of the Spirit," the author contrasts the materialistic thought of the universe as a warehouse with the prophetic thought of the universe as a church, "every fragment of creation endowed with the preaching office." He insists: "The preacher can never be superseded; he has his roots in the nature of things." In succeeding chapters we are asked to think of some of the prophetic personalities, the preachers who have kept the world's soul alive. The second chapter deals with Moses, the first Hebrew prophet, who yet was instructed in all the learning of the Egyptians. The lecturer remarks: "Prophetic power in the pulpit does not specially attach to the preacher whose heart is full and his head empty." In the third chapter, after a fascinating characterization of John the Baptist, we are led into the Apostolic age, to the study of the early messengers and their messages of equality and immortality, and are urged to enter with the abandon of the primitive church, into the proclamation of these two messages. The fourth lecture discusses the two great preachers of the fourth century, Chrysostom and Athanasius. "Chrysostom I think knew men better, and Athanasius I think knew God better." Our author concludes that the prophet and orator of tomorrow must have intimate

¹ *The Romance of Preaching*. By Charles Silvester Horne. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co. \$1.25.

acquaintance with God and man. In the fifth lecture we have a suggestive study of three preachers, "Rulers of the Peoples": Savonarola, "who preached so that his hearers were ready to fight and die for the faith," who "challenged the contemptuous dictum that 'states cannot be ruled by paternosters'"; Calvin the scholar, who was drawn from his retirement, not "by a sense of responsibility to a church, but by a sense of destiny to a city"; and John Knox, "who united to the statesmanship of Calvin the fiery eloquence of Savonarola," the preacher who ever preached "with a mighty application" and who instructs us not to be afraid of "unworthy frowns" or "the seducing smiles of fashion or wealth or rank."

The sixth lecture brings us to a study of preachers as "Founders of Freedom." With his characteristic sense of the fitness of things, the lecturer selects for special consideration Robinson, preacher to the Pilgrims. "Let it never be forgotten that modern America sprang out of the ideal relation between a pastor and a church; a man of God and a people of God." The study is really a plea for simplicity of pulpit speech, for earnestness of pulpit prayer, for the careful exploration of the wide, rich, unknown tracts of Scripture, and for the steadfast purpose on the part of the preacher to create a church in which all the Lord's people shall be prophets. In the seventh chapter the "Passion for Evangelism" is illustrated by two men of contrasted training and temper, John Wesley and Whitefield. These men used all the mighty forces of personality to evangelize "miners, puddlers, weavers." The thought of Whitefield in the full power of his eloquence makes the author "feel as if this is the one thing to pray for, that God will raise up a new race of genuine orators for the evangel, who without any unworthy artifices will shake men's souls and thrill their hearts."

In the last lecture on "The Romance of Preaching," Silvester Horne with unintentional but dramatic self-revelation bids his hearers remember the elements which give to preaching its romance, for example, "the mystery and wonder of the human spirit," "the wonder of conversion," "the new applications of Christ's teachings which will revive the interest of the people in Christianity to a surprising degree," the fact that "over this world of military camps, bristling frontiers and armored fleets there is being heard today with new insistence the ever-romantic strains of the angels' song of Peace and Good-will." The closing words linger in the memory long after one has laid down the book: "In the splendid certainty of inspiration which is the gift of God whose gifts are 'without repentance' may you accept your ministry at your Master's hands;

and living in the dignity and the glory of it, serve your generation, by the will of God, before you fall asleep!"

The diction of the lectures is superb, the movement of thought swift and strong. We seem to be borne along by the momentum of an advancing army. The author is one of "the knights of Christ" of whom he speaks.

The high soul burns on to light men's feet
Where death for noble ends makes dying sweet.

For many years Dr. Hoyt has been a successful teacher of preachers. His earlier books, *The Work of Preaching* and *The Preacher*, assure a welcome for his latest work.¹ The material of the book has already passed through the crucible of the classroom. It consists of lectures given "for three years to Senior classes at Auburn Seminary" and "at the University of Chicago in the summer of nineteen hundred and twelve."

Dr. Hoyt quotes from the *Life of Broadus* a word to this effect: "He interpreted people to themselves. He enabled them to know what they did know, and to feel what they had long felt." The writer does for us a like service. He does not tell us many new things. He helps us rather to know what we knew already and to feel what we had long felt. In these lectures to young preachers, he calls upon all preachers to measure up to the greatness of their calling.

After discriminating chapters on the present difficulties and opportunities of the ministry, Dr. Hoyt counsels us to learn the Secret of the Heart, to gain the Human Touch, to preach a Man's Gospel, to conquer the common ministerial temptations to "laziness" and "lying," to carelessness in money matters and in social relations. He would have us preach to our age, yet preach Christ the Eternal Contemporary. He would have us preach in the language of the age, yet in language of fitting simplicity, dignity, and strength. There is significant emphasis upon the Ministry of Comfort. It is easy for a minister to become a common scold, and the word of the distinguished scholar to John Watson deserves pondering: "Your best work in the pulpit has been to put heart into men for the coming week." There is a good discussion of the Children's Sermon, with illustrations from the preaching of some of the effective ministers of Scotland, England, and America. Dr. Hoyt appreciates the exceeding difficulty of preaching to children, but

¹ *Vital Elements of Preaching*. By Arthur S. Hoyt. New York: Macmillan, 1914. \$1.50.

believes that such preaching helps to give to all preaching the needed simplicity, vividness, and concreteness. He insists that if the children's sermon precedes the sermon to adults, the themes of the two sermons should harmonize, so that the entire service may be unified. He is inclined to think, however, that the average preacher may do his best pulpit work as he preaches the single sermon in which he holds clearly in mind the needs of the children as of the adults.

The book is enriched by illustrations from the author's wide reading and deep experience of life. The occasional repetitions of thought and phrase would seem better suited to the spoken lecture than to the written book.

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HAERING'S DOGMATICS

One is glad to see this publication, in English translation, of the theological system of the well-known Ritschlian theologian, Professor Theodor Haering, of Tübingen.¹ One notes the insistence, so characteristic of the school of Ritschl, that the basis of the religious knowledge on which systematic theology must be built is, on the subjective side, the consciousness of *value* received by those who have in faith responded to Jesus Christ as the historical revelation of God, and, on the objective side, this historical *revelation* which itself gives rise to Christian faith. "A truth of Christian faith must have immediate value for Christian experience"; but "it is not the subjective experience which furnishes the adequate ground of the truth, but the divine revelation, as it proves its reality to human need" (pp. 110, 111). "The believer does not regard what is valuable as real, because it is valuable for him, but because it meets him as real; . . . however, not as a reality which no one can deny—rather as one which only he can acknowledge who is willing to acknowledge its value personally" (p. 67).

In spite of these well-balanced statements, however, and notwithstanding the reiterated emphasis upon the fundamental facts of revelation, it must be said that, philosophically considered, Haering's system does not quite succeed in avoiding that Kantian absolute dualism of the experienced and the independently real which has made the possibility

¹ *The Christian Faith: A System of Dogmatics*. By Theodor Haering. Translated from the second (1912) German edition, by John Dickie and George Ferries. London, New York, and Toronto: Hodder & Stoughton, 1913. 2 vols. xi+487, xi+(952-487=) 465 pages. \$6.00.